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A Sovereigne Antidote
Against
SABBATARIAN
ERRORS.

OR,
A Decision of the chiefe Doubts and
Difficulties touching the SABBATH.

Wherein these three Questions (beside others
coincident) are clearly and succinctly
determined, viz.

I. *Which is the fittest Name whcreby to call the Day of
Christian Weekly Rest, whether Sabbath day,
Lords-day, or Sunday?*

II. *What is the meaning of that Prayer, appointed to
be used by our Church: Lord have mercy upon us,
and encline, &c. as it is repeated and applyed to the
words of the fourth Commandment.*

III. *Whether it be lawfull to use any Bodily Recreation
on the Lords-day: and if so, what kinde of Recreation?*

By a Reverend, Religious, and judicious Divine.

L O N D O N:

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signe of the Talbot. 1636.



SABBATH
ERRORES

A Decision of the Chief Deputies

of the General Assembly of the
Presbyterian Church in the
United States of America

in relation to the
conduct of the
ministry in the
United States of America
and the
General Assembly of the
Presbyterian Church in the
United States of America
in relation to the
conduct of the
ministry in the
United States of America

10:35



To the READER.



IT is a matter of great use and necessity to have now in remembrance the admonition of the Apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles, *Remember them, which have the rule over you, obey them, and submit your selves.* Hebr. 13. 7. 17. and esteeme them *very highly in love, for their works sake,* 1. Thes. 5. 13. And it is not without reason; because in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, they worke the worke of the Lord, and they watch for our sake, as they that must give account. 1. Tim. 3. 15. 1. Cor. 16. 10. Heb.

To the Reader.

13. 17. whose office is so honourable, that God himselfe not onely hath given a charge, that *every man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the Priest*, the man shall be put away from Israel, but hath also severally this inobediency punished: *The wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and gave them into the hands of the king of Chaldees, because they mocked the messenger of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets.* Deut. 17. 12. 2. Chron. 36. 16.

Yet this is the contumacy and madnesse of some boasters, and some unthankfull men, which no otherwise, but as *Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses*, 2. Tim. 2. 3. so they them, whom Divine Oracle hath adjudged *to be worthy of double honour*: 1. Tim. 5. 17. saying in effect to them as *Korab* did (with certaine of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty Princes) to *Moses and Aaron*, *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all*
the

To the Reader.

the congregation are holy every one of them: Wherefore then lift you up your selves above the congregation of the Lord? Num. 16. 3.

The experiment of these things gives every day our *England*, in the businesse of the Sabbatarians, who measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves amongst themselves, even as in times past, the Scribes and Pharisees for a pretence make long prayer, devoure widows houses, Mat. 23. 14. so they creep into houses, and in a shape of sanctimony (is it through the envy, or strife, or ignorance, I cannot tell) they cast a snare upon the silly consciences of men, making concision in the Church of the Lord, and so *the middle wall of partition* which Christ hath broken downe, Ephel. 2. 14. they do renew, and this doing, shew themselves to be the deceitfull workers.

Therefore to avoyd this confusion,
we

To the Reader.

we bring forth in the light this discourse
penned for private satisfaction, and now
approved to be printed for the publicke
edification of the Church. Wherein the
excellent Author seemes to have imita-
ted them which have the Art to make
Roses grow *fine spinis*, without a thorne,
and yet be as faire and fragrant as any
other: so that his Pedalean penne deli-
vered us a Theologicall decision of Sab-
baths difficulties, *fine spinosis & pedagogi-
cis argutiis*; yet punctually to the minde
of Christ, and the Church. Worthily
therefore may it be presented to the
Church of England, and to be accepted
of thy favour.



A DECISION OF THE CHIEFE

Points and Difficulties touch-
ing the SABBATH, written to a
private Friend: and now publisht
for the satisfaction of others.

Sir,

I Have now sent
you but a naked
summary of my
Thoughts, con-
cerning the three
Questions; abstracted from all
those Explanations, Reasons,
Testimonies of Authors, Remo-
vals

vals of Objections, and other such Enlargements as might have given further both lustre and strength thereto. Howsoever, by what I presently send, you may see what my opinion is: which I shall be ready to cleare, so farre as my understanding will serve, in any Particular, wherein you shall remaine doubtfull: and as ready to alter, when any man shall instruct me better, if he bring good evidence either of Reason or Scripture for what he affirmes.

March 28. 1634.



What kind of Rectations?

The Questions are:

1. **VV** Hich is the fittest Name whereby to call the Day of our Christian weekly Rest? whether, *Sabbath, Lords-day, or Sunday?*

2. What is the meaning of that Prayer appointed to be used by our Church; **L O R D** *have mercy upon us, and incline, &c.* as it is repeated after, and applyed to the words of the fourth Commandment.

B 2

3. **VV**he-

3. Whether it be lawfull to
use any bodily Recreation upon
the Lords Day? and if so, then,
what kinde of Recreations?

To



To the first Question.

I. **C**oncerning the Name *Sabbathum*,
or Sabbath, I thus conceive:

1. That in Scripture, Antiquitie, and
all Ecclesiasticall writers, it is constant-
ly appropriated to the Day of the Iewes
Sabbath, or Saturday, and not at all (till
of late yeares) used to signifie our Lords-
day, or Sunday.

2. That to call Sunday, by the name
of the Sabbath-day (*rebus sic stantibus*)
may for some respects be allowed in the
Christian Church, without any great in-
convenience: and that therefore Men
(otherwise sober and moderate) ought
not to be censured with too much seve-
rity, nor charged with Iudaisme, if some-
times they so use it.

B. 3

3. That

3. That yet for sundry other respects, it were perhaps much more expedient, if the word *Sabbath* (in that notion) were either not at all, or more sparingly used.

II.

Concerning the Name, *Dominica*, or the Lords-day:

1. That it was taken up in memory of our Lord Christs Resurrection, and the great worke of our Redemption accomplished therein.

2. That it hath warrant from the Scripture: (*Apoc. I. 10.*) and hath beene of long continued use in the Christian Church, to signifie the first Day of the weeke, or Sunday.

III.

Concerning the Name, *Dies Solis*, or Sunday:

1. That it is taken from the course of the Planets, as the Names of the other Dayes are: the reason whereof is to be learned from Astronomers.

2. That

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2. That it hath beene long and generally used in most parts of the world.

3. That it is not justly chargeable with Heathenisme: and that it proceedeth from much weaknesse (at the least) if not rather superstition, that some men condemne the use of it, as prophane, heathenish, or unlawfull.

IIII.

Of the fitnessse of the aforesaid three Names compar'd one with the other.

That according to the generall matter or occasion of speech, each of the three may be fitter in some respects, and more proper to be used then either of the other two, *viz.* the Name *Sabbath*, when we speake of a time of Rest, indeterminate, and in generall, without reference to any particular Day. And the other two, when we speake determinately of that Day which is observ'd in the Christian Church.

Of

Of which two againe:

1. That, of the Lords-day, is fitter in Theologicall and Ecclesiasticall use.

2. That of Sunday, in the Civill, Popular, and common use: yet so; as None of these three be condemned as utterly unlawfull, whatloever the matter or occasion be; but that every man be left to his Christian liberty herein, so long as superiour authority restrains it not. Provided ever, that what he doth herein, he do without vanity or affectation in himselfe, or uncharitable judging or despising his brother, that doth otherwise then himselfe.

To

To the second Question.

The words of that Prayer (*Lord have mercy, &c.*) repeated after the fourth Commandment, evidently import (as in each of the other ten.)

I.

An acknowledgement of three things: *viz.*

1. That the words of that particular Commandment containe a law where-
to we are subject.

2. That it is our bounden dutie to
endeavour with our utmost power to
keepe the said law.

3. That our naughty hearts have of
themselves no inclination to keepe it, till
God by the worke of his grace encline
them thereto.

II.

A double supplication: *viz.*

1 For Mercy in respect of the time
C past,

past, because we have faild of our bounden duty heretofore.

2 For Grace, in respect of the time to come, that we may performe our duties better hereafter.

But how farre forth, the words of the fourth Commandement are to be taken as a Law binding Christians, and by what authority they have that binding power, is the maine difficulty.

For the resolution whereof, it may suffice every sober-minded Christian to understand the Prayer appointed by the Church, in that meaning which the words immediately import; and without over-curious enquiry into those things which are more disputable, to beleeve these few points following, which ought to be taken as certaine, and granted, amongst Christians: *viz.*

1 That no part of the Law, delivered by *Moses* to the Iews, doth binde Christians under the Gospell, as by vertue of that

concerning the Sabbath. II

that Delivery, no not the 10. Commandements themselves : but least of all, the Fourth, which all confesse to be (at least) in some part, ceremoniall.

2 That the particular determination of the time, to the seventh day of the weeke, was ceremoniall; and so the obligation of the fourth Commandement in that respect (though it were *Juris Divini positivi* to the Jew) is ceased, together with other legall Ceremonies since the publishing of the Gospell, and binds not Christian consciences.

3 That the substance of the fourth Commandement in the generall, (*viz.* that some certaine time should be set apart from secular employments, to be sanctified to an holy rest for the better attending on Gods publick and solemne worship) is Morall and perpetuall; and of Divine Right, as a branch of the law of Nature, whereto Christians under the Gospell are still bound.

C 2

4 That

4 That, *de facto*, the Lords-day or Sunday is the time appointed to us, for that purpose, by such sufficient Authority, as we stand bound in conscience to obey: *Absque hoc*, whether that Authority be immediately Divine, or mediately, through the power of the Church.

This is sufficient to regulate the judgement and conscience of every ordinary Christian: yet, it is not unlawfull for Scholars soberly and fairely to argue and debate (a little further) matters which are questionable, for the better finding out of the truth. And

The points are two: *viz.*

1 Concerning the observation of a weekly *Sabbath*, whether it be of necessity, to keepe one day of every seven: and by what right we are tyed so to do.

2 Concerning the change of the Iewish *Sabbath* into the Lords-day, and by what Authority it was done.

Touch-

I.

Touching the observation of a weekly Sabbath, there are these three different opinions: viz.

1. That it is *de jure Naturali*, as a branch properly of the Law of Nature.
- 2 That it is properly and directly *de jure Divino positivo*, establisht by Gods expresse positive ordinance in his word.
- 3 That it is meerly *de jure Humano & Ecclesiastico*, introduced by Authority, and establisht by the custome and consent of the Catholicke Church.

Touching which three opinions, I leave it to the judicious to consider,

Whether the last of them might not happe to be of evill consequence, by leaving it in the power of every particular Church, at her pleasure to change the old proportion of one in seven (which hath continued ever since *Moses*) into any other greater or lesse proportion of time.

2 Whether the two former opinions (though they indeed avoid that inconvenience) do not yet stand on such weak grounds otherwise, that they are by many degrees more improbable then the third:

3 Whether a fourth opinion going in the middle way might not be propoſed with greater probability, and entertain'd with better ſafety then any of the former three: *viz.* That the keeping holy of one day in ſeven, is of Divine Poſitive Right; taking *jus Divinum* in a large ſignification, not for that which is primarily, properly, and directly ſuch, according to the tenour of the ſecond opinion: but including withall, that which is ſecundarily, conſequently, and analogically ſuch.

For the better underſtanding whereof, we are to conſider,

1 That thoſe things are *de jure Divino* in the firſt and ſtrict ſenſe, which either

ther are enjoynd by the expresse ordinance and command of God in his holy word : or may be deduced therefrom, by necessarie, evident, and demonstrative Illation. In which sense, there are not very many things *de Iure Divino*, in the New Testament.

2 That for a thing to be *de jure Divino* in the latter and larger sense, it sufficeth, that it may be by humane discourse upon Reasons of congruity, probably deduced from the Word of God, as a thing most convenient to be observed by all such as desire unfainedly to order their wayes according to Gods holy will.

3 This kinde of *jus Divinum* may be reasonably discern'd by the concurrence of all or the chieft of these foure things following: viz.

1 A foundation of equity for the thing, in generall, either in the Law of Nature, or by vertue of Divine Institution.

2 An

2 An Analogy held for the particular determination, with such laws and directions as were given to the Jewish people in the old Testament, so farre as the Reason of equity holds alike.

3 Some probable insinuations thereof in the Scripture of the new Testament.

4 The continued practise of the Christian Church, so farre as the condition of the times in the severall Ages thereof would permit: for, *Lex currit cum praxi*.

Fourthly, that all these do in some measure concur for the observation of a weekly *Sabbath*: as upon examination of the severall particulars, will easily appeare.

This distinction of *Ius Divinum* is to be observed the rather, because it may be of very good use (if rightly understood and applied.)

1 For cutting off, the most materiall instances usually brought by the Romish

with party for maintenance of their unwritten traditions.

Secondly, for the clearing of some, and silencing of other some controversies in the Church disputed *Pro & Con* with much heat, viz.

1 The government of the Church by Bishops.

2 The distinction of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

3 The exercise of Ecclesiasticall censures, as suspension, excommunication, &c.

4 The building and consecrating of Churches for Divine service.

5 The assembly of Synods upon needfull occasions, for maintenance of the truth, and settling of Church-affaires.

6 Prohibition of Marriages to be made within certaine degrees of consanguinity and affinity.

7 Baptizing of Infants born of Christian

stian Parents.

8 Maintenance of the Clergie by Tythes. And sundry other things.

Some of which (have beene doubted of) in that prime and proper sense, but yet all or most of them in my understanding seeme at least to be *de Iure Divino*, in the latter and larger sense and signification.

Thirdly, For the right bounding of the Churches power, that she be neither denyed her lawfull liberty in some things, nor yet assume to her selfe a greater power then of right belongs to her, in other some: For,

1 In things that are meetly *de Iure Humano*, every particular Church hath power in her selfe from time to time to order and alter them at her pleasure, and may exercise that Power, when shee thinks fit.

2 Things that are *de iure Divino* in that first sense, the universall Church
may

concerning the Sabbath. 19

may not (much lesse any Particular) at all take upon her to alter : but must observe them inviolably, whatever necessities or distresses she be put to.

3 Things that are *de iure Divino* in the latter sense, every particular Church (but much more the universall) hath power to alter in case of necessitie : but the exercise of that power is so limited to extraordinary cases, that it may not be safe for her at all to exercise it, unlesse it be for the avoiding of mighty inconveniences not otherwise to be avoided.

II.

As for the other controverted Point, touching the change of the Day from the last of the weeke or Saturday (which was the Iews Sabbath) to the first of the Weeke, or Sunday, which is our Lords-day ; my opinion is, that the observation of the Lords-day among Christians, instead of the Iewish Sabbath ;

1 Is not grounded on any Command given by Christ to his Apostles.

2 Nor yet upon any Apostolicke Institution given by the Apostles to the Churches in that behalfe : but;

3 That it was taken up by the succeeding Church, partly in imitation of some of the Apostles who used, especially, in the Churches of the Gentiles ; (for in the Churches of the Iewvs the old *Sabbath* was still observed) to celebrate their holy Assemblies the first Day of the weeke in honour of Christ and his Resurrection : and partly for avoiding of Iudaisme, wherewith false teachers in those first times were ever and anon attempting to enthrall the Christian Church.

4 That the observation of the *Lords-day* having beene confirmed by so many Constitutions, Ecclesiasticall, and Imperiall ; and having, withall, continued with such uniforme consent through the

concerning the Sabbath. 21

the whole Christian world for so many
Ages ever since the Apostles times, the
Church (not to dispute what she may
or may not do *ex plenitudine potestatis*)
ought not to attempt the altering of it,
to any other Day of the weeke.

To

Do

the world's Christ in world for many
Ages and those who believe in
Christ in his to deliver what he says
or may not do in the future (see
ought not to arrange the placing of a
to any other day of the year.

It is the duty of every Christian
to be ready to give an account of
his faith and life.

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To the third Question :

Touching Recreations.

IN this matter much need not to be said, there being little difficultie in it; and his Majesties last Declaration in that behalfe, having put it past Disputation : I say then;

First, for the thing. No man can reasonably condemne the moderate use of lawfull Recreations on the *Lords-day*, as simply & *de toto genere* unlawfull.

Secondly, for the kinde : Albeit there can be no certaine Rules given herein
(as

(as in most indifferent things it comes to passe) by reason of the infinite varietie of circumstances, to fit with all particular cases; but that still, much must be left to private Discretion: yet, for some Directions in this Point, respect would be had (in the choice of our Recreations.)

1 To the publicke Lawes of the State: Such Games or sports as are by Law prohibited, though in themselves otherwise lawfull, being unlawfull to them that are under obedience of the Law.

2 To the condition of the Person. Walking and Discourfing which to men of liberall education, is a pleasant Recreation, is no way delightsome to the ruder sort of people, who scarce account any thing a sport which is not loud and boisterous.

3 To the effects of the Recreations themselves: Those, being the meetest
to

to be used, which give the best Refreshing to the Bodie, and leave the least impression in the Minde. In this respect, Shooting, Leaping, pitching the Barre, Stoole-ball, &c. are rather to be chosen then Dicing, and Carding.

Thirdly, for the Use. That men would be exhorted to use their Recreations and Pastimes on the *Lords-day* in godly and commendable sort: For which purpose, amongst others, these Cautions would be remembred.

1 That they be used with great moderation, as at all other times, so especially, and much more on the *Lords-Day*.

2 That they be used at seasonable times, not in time of Divine Service.

3 That they be so used, as they may rather make men fitter for Gods Service the rest of the Day, and for the

Works of their Vocation the rest of the weeke, then any way hinder or disable them therto by over-wearying the Bodie, or immoderately affecting the Minde.

4 That they use them not doubt-
ingly: for whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sinne. Hee therefore that is not satisfied in his owne judgement, that he may lawfully, and without sinne, use bodily Recreations on the *Lords-day*, ought by all meanes to forbear the Use thereof, lest he sinne against his owne conscience.

5 That they bee severer towards themselves then towards others, in the use of their Christian libertie herein: not making their owne opinion or practise, a Rule to their Brethren. In this, as in all other indifferent things, a wise and charitable Man will in godly wisdom denie himselfe many times the Use

concerning the Sabbath. 27

Vse of that Libertie, which in godly
Charitie hee dare not denie to his Bro-
ther.

FIN IS.

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concerning the Sabbath.

27
Vie of that Liberie, which in golly
Charitie hee dare not deny to his Bro-
thers.

FIN IS.



PERlegi brevem hunc Tractatum de Sab-
bato, in quo nihil reperio sanæ fidei, aut
bonis moribus contrarium.

Tho. Weekes: R. P.

Ep. Lond. Cap. Domest.



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